

**GLOSSARY
MASTER INDEX**

4th DIMENSION[®]



GLOSSARY AND MASTER INDEX

4th DIMENSION by Laurent Ribardière

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

Accept The act of saving a record. In an input layout this is commonly done by typing the Enter key or pressing an accept button.

Access privileges See Password access privileges.

Access system See Password access system.

Active object An object in a layout that can process data or carry out an action. Active objects are created using the Create Active Object tool or the Add Field tool. They include: fields, buttons, enterable areas, and indicators.

Administrator One of two users that is created automatically by the Password editor. The Administrator is the default group owner for all groups created by the database designer. The administrator can also create and manage users and add users to groups.

After phase The last phase of the execution cycle in an input layout. The After phase occurs when the user accepts a record.

Alert box A dialog in a modal window of fixed size that informs the user of a condition. For example, if you try to enter an invalid value, 4th DIMENSION will display an alert box that tells you that the value is invalid.

Alpha field A field type that consists of alphanumeric characters (letters, numbers, and other characters) and has a maximum length of 80.

Application A 4th DIMENSION database with custom menus. An application runs in the Runtime environment using 4th DIMENSION or it runs with 4th DIMENSION Runtime.

Apply Formula A menu command that is used to perform a global update on the current selection. Choosing Apply Formula displays the Formula editor.

Argument Information passed to and from commands, functions, and procedures. *\$0, \$1*

Array A series of values stored temporarily in memory. The values are referenced by the array name followed by braces, ({...}). An array is typed and declared using one of the language's array commands. Arrays are commonly displayed as scrollable areas or pop-up menus.

Array element One of the values stored in an array.

Ascending order A sort direction that goes from lower to higher. For example, A to Z, early to late, and so forth.

ASCII A system used by computers to represent characters of the alphabet and other special characters used internally by the computer.

Assignment operator (:=) A symbol used by the procedural language to assign the value returned by the expression on its right to the expression on its left.

Automatic relation A relation between files that automatically loads records from the related file whenever appropriate. An automatic relation gives the user the ability to perform searches, sorts and other database operations across files.

Average The arithmetic mean, that is, the sum divided by the count.

Backup A copy of a database that is stored in a safe place in case the original database is damaged or lost.

Before phase The first phase of the execution cycle in a layout procedure. The Before phase occurs before a record is displayed.

Bidirectional relation A relation between files that is both one-to-many and many-to-one.

Boolean field A field that stores only one of two values, TRUE or FALSE. A Boolean field can be displayed on a layout as either a check box or a pair of radio buttons. On a Quick report, a Boolean field is displayed with the words TRUE or FALSE.

Branching statement Statements which direct procedure flow. The If...End if and Case...End case programming structures are branching statements.

Break area The part of a report between two groups of records. The Break area is the part of a report in which summary calculations can be displayed. In an output layout, a Break area is created by moving the Break markers; in a Quick report, a Break area is defined by creating a Break row.

Break header A separate Header area associated with a particular break level. A break header is used to display information once above a given break level.

Break marker The triangle in the vertical ruler of the Layout editor used to size the Break area.

Break processing The process by which sorted records are divided into logical groups.

Break row A row in the Quick Report editor in which summary calculations for groups of records appear.

Button An active object on a layout that performs an action when the user clicks it.

Button text The text used to label a button.

Can't modify A field attribute used to prevent users from modifying the value of a field after the record has been accepted. A "Can't modify" field can be modified using the language.

Cancel The act of discarding a new record or modifications to an existing record. In an input layout this is commonly done by typing Command-period or pressing a cancel button.

Character reference symbols Symbols used to refer to a specific character in a string. The character reference symbols, " \leq " and " \geq " are placed around a number that denotes the position of the character being referenced.

Check box A type of button that displays as a small square followed by a label. Clicking a check box causes it to toggle between being checked (an "X" appears in the box) and unchecked. Boolean fields can be displayed as check boxes.

Choice list A list created in the Lists editor that is used to display a list of choices during data entry or to limit the values that can be entered.

Clone A copy of a database structure. A clone of a database contains all the specifications for the database—files, fields, layouts, procedures, menus, lists, and so forth—but no data.

Code A series of statements written using the language.

Command-click The act of holding down the command-key and clicking the mouse button.

Command-key The key with the Apple symbol and/or the cloverleaf on it.

Commands Built-in 4th DIMENSION procedures and functions.

Conjunction operator An operator used in a compound search to combine simple search conditions, i.e., “and,” “or,” and “except.”

Control-of-flow The order in which statements in a procedure are executed. The If and Case of programming structures are used to modify control of flow.

Current record The record upon which data management operations, such as modifying or saving, are performed. There is one current record for each file.

Current selection The records upon which operations that require a group of records are performed. For example, the following operations use the current selection: listing, sorting, and reporting. The current selection is commonly displayed in an output layout. Each file has its own current selection. The current record is always in the current selection.

Custom menu A menu created in the Menu editor.

Data The information stored in a database.

Data entry The process of entering information into a database. Data is entered in the User or Runtime environments.

Data entry order The order in which enterable areas are selected when pressing the Tab key during data entry. The entry order can be set in the layout editor.

Data file The disk file that contains all the data and indexes in a database.

Data type A specification that determines the kind of information that is stored in a field or variable. The data types are Alphanumeric, Numeric, Date, Time, Boolean, Picture, and Pointer.

Data validation The process of determining whether data entered is appropriate. Data validation methods include range checking, entry filters, use of choice lists, and monitoring data entry using procedures.

Database An integrated information management system. A 4th DIMENSION database consists of data, layouts, procedures, files, relations, menus, and so forth.

Date field A field type, which allows entries of dates between 100 AD and the year 32,767. Dates are entered in month/day/year format.

Debugger A window in 4th DIMENSION that is used to examine procedures as they execute. The debugger is very useful for determining the cause of programming errors.

Debugging The process of eliminating errors in a database or application.

Default value An initial piece of information that is automatically entered into a field when a new record is first displayed. For example, a sequence number generated by 4th DIMENSION can be used as a default value.

Descending order A particular sort direction that goes from high to low. For example, Z to A, latest to earliest, and so forth.

Design environment The part of 4th DIMENSION in which databases are designed. The Design environment consists of the Structure, Layout, Procedure, Password, Menu, List and Style editors.

Designer One of two users that are created automatically in the Passwords editor. The Designer is the only user who has access to the Design environment.

Detail area The part of a report in which records are listed individually.

Detail marker The triangle in the vertical ruler of the Layout editor that is used to size the Detail area.

Detail row The row in the Quick Report editor in which the formatting for a column is specified.

Development The process of creating an application.

Dial An active object that displays a numeric value as a portion of a semicircle. *See also* Thermometer *and* Ruler.

Dialog box A window of fixed size in which information is entered or displayed. You cannot switch to another window while a dialog box is open.

Display format A format that is used when information is displayed on a layout. A display format does not affect the way the information is stored, only how it is presented.

Display only A field attribute that prevents users from entering data into a field. "Display only" fields are not included in the data entry order and can only be assigned values using the language.

During phase The phase of the execution cycle that takes place when a field or object is modified.

Editor An integrated system of tools used to design or access a specific aspect of a database.

Element *See* Array element.

Enter in list A mode in the User environment in which the output layout can be used to enter and modify information.

Enterable An attribute of an active object that allows the user to select the object and enter a value.

Enterable related field A field from a related file on a layout that is enterable. By default, fields from related files are enterable, but this can be modified on a field-by-field basis.

Entry filter A data validation technique used to examine an entry on a character-by-character basis.

Entry order *See* Data entry order.

Environment A general term used to describe a part of 4th DIMENSION. 4th DIMENSION has three environments: Design, User, and Runtime.

Excluded list A data validation technique that specifies values that cannot be entered into an enterable area.

Execute To run a procedure.

Execution cycle The system that monitors when layout procedures and scripts are executed. The execution cycle consists of a series of phases.

Export The process of transferring records out of 4th DIMENSION.

External object An active object on a layout that is controlled by an external procedure.

External procedure A procedure written outside 4th DIMENSION in a programming language that compiles to 68000 code. External procedures are moved into 4th DIMENSION to provide extended capabilities.

Field An area in which you store information about a particular attribute. For example, Last Name, Address, City, and State might be fields in a Contacts file.

Field attributes Global properties assigned to a field. Field attributes are assigned in the Field dialog box in the Structure editor. The attributes are Indexed, Can't modify, Display only, Unique, and Mandatory.

Field type A property of a field that determines the kind of data it can store. Field types are Alpha, Text, Integer, Long Integer, Real, Date, Time, Boolean, Picture, and Subfile.

File The basic structure in which records are stored.

File procedure A procedure that is associated with a file and is automatically executed whenever any input layout belonging to the file is used.

File structure The system of files in the database and any relations that exist between the files.

First page An automatic button action used only in an input layout. It changes the display to the first page of the layout but does not accept the record.

First record An automatic button action used only in an input layout. It accepts the record and changes the display to the first record in the selection.

Fixed frame (multiple records) A printing format for included layouts. It specifies that the size of the included layout remains constant. If there are more records than fit within the included layout, the parent layout is repeated until all included records are printed.

Fixed frame (truncated) A printing format for included layouts. It specifies that the size of the included layout remains constant and that any records that don't fit within the included layout are not printed.

Flowchart editor An editor used to write procedures or scripts graphically as a series of steps and tests.

Footer area The area that appears at the bottom of each page in a printed report.

Footer marker The triangle in the vertical ruler of the Layout editor that is used to size the Footer area.

Formula A one-line statement or expression written in the Formula editor that returns or assigns a value.

Formula editor The dialog box used to build a formula. The formula editor appears in several places including Search by Formula and Apply Formula.

Full-page layout An input layout for a file or subfile that is displayed when a record in an included layout is double-clicked.

Function A procedure or command that returns a value.

Global procedure A type of procedure that can be called by other procedures or functions or be attached to custom menu items. A global procedure that returns a value is a function.

Global update A modification of the records in the current selection. A global update is done using the Apply Formula menu item in the User environment or the APPLY TO SELECTION command in the language.

Global variable A variable whose value is available to all procedures in the database. *See also* Local variable.

Graph area An active object on a layout that displays a graph.

Graphic objects Objects created in the Layout editor that serve only as decoration. They do not process data or perform actions. For example, lines, rectangles, and circles are graphic objects.

Grid object A type of graphic object that displays a series of rows and columns.

Group A collection of users and/or other groups used in the Password access system. Groups are assigned access to different parts of the database.

Group owner The user who can control the membership of a group.

Guest A user of a password protected database that has not been assigned specific access privileges.

Header area The area that appears once per page at the top of a printed report.

Header marker The triangle in the vertical ruler of the Layout editor that is used to create and size the Header area.

Header row The row in the Quick Report editor that is used to control the contents of the header in a printed report.

Highlight button A type of button that inverts (black becomes white and white becomes black) when it is clicked but is otherwise invisible.

Import The process of transferring records into 4th DIMENSION.

Included layout A type of object in a layout that displays a list of records from a subfile or another file.

Index An internal table that is built and maintained by 4th DIMENSION to speed searches and sorts. 4th DIMENSION builds and maintains an index if the Indexed field attribute is checked.

Indexed search A search that uses an index. An indexed search is faster than a sequential search. *See also* Sequential search.

Indicators A general term that describes three types of active objects—thermometers, rulers, and dials.

Input layout A layout that displays one record at a time and is commonly used to enter and modify data.

Integer field A field type that stores only whole numbers between $\pm 32,767$.

Invisible button A type of button that is transparent and does not highlight when it is clicked. Invisible buttons are generally placed in front of graphics. This placement creates the illusion that the user is clicking on the graphic.

Key field A field that uniquely identifies a record. A key field is commonly used in a relation to identify the related record in the One file.

Keywords A set of symbols, words and phrases that are used frequently in programming. Keywords appear in the Keywords panel in the Procedure editor.

Last page An automatic button action used only in an input layout. It changes the display to the last page of the layout but does not accept the record.

Last record An automatic button action used only in an input layout. It accepts the record and changes the display to the last record in the selection.

Layout A form composed of fields, variables, buttons, and other objects. You work with your data through layouts.

Layout editor The editor in the Design environment in which you design layouts and access scripts.

Layout menus A menu bar associated with a particular layout. Layout menus are displayed when the associated layout is used in either the User or Runtime environments. Layout menus are appended to the current menu bar.

Layout procedure A procedure associated with a layout that executes automatically whenever the layout is used. Layout procedures can be used to establish default values, process information, or post data to other files.

Layout template One of eight designs used to create a layout. A layout template is commonly used to generate layouts quickly.

List A series of items that can be used in a database for look-ups, data validation, and other purposes.

"List of files" window The window in the User environment used to change files and layouts.

Listing editor The editor used to write procedures as a sequence of statements.

Lists editor The editor in the Design environment used to create lists.

Local variable A variable that can be used only within a single procedure. A local variable is cleared after the procedure executes.

Logical operator An operator used to compare two values, for example, "is equal to," "is greater than," and so forth.

Long integer field A field type that stores only whole numbers between $\pm 2,147,483,647$.

Loop A programming structure that executes the same statements repeatedly until a condition is met.

Mail merge The ability to combine the contents of fields with a form letter. To create a mail merge document, fields or variables are embedded in a text area on a layout.

Mandatory A field attribute that requires that a value be entered before the record can be accepted.

Many file One of the two files in a relation. Several records in the Many file are related to a specific record in the One file.

Many-to-one relation An association between two files in which a record in the One file is selected by matching the value of a field in the Many file with the related field in the One file.

Marquee A flashing rectangle that is drawn with the Arrow tool in the Layout editor. Drawing a marquee selects the objects enclosed or intersected by the marquee.

Master file The file to which a layout belongs.

Menu editor The editor in the Design environment in which you create custom menus and assign global procedures to menu items.

Multi-page layout An input layout with two or more pages (screens). Buttons can be used to move from page to page.

Multi-user A mode in which several people can use the same database simultaneously. In multi-user mode, 4th DIMENSION automatically handles possible conflicts that can arise when two or more people try to access and modify the same record.

Network A system of hardware and software that connects more than one computer.

Next page An automatic button action used only in an input layout. It changes the display to the next page of the layout but does not accept the record.

Next record An automatic button action used only in an input layout. It accepts the record and changes the display to the next record in the selection.

Numeric field A field that contains numbers. A numeric field can be of the type Integer, Long integer, or Real.

Object Any item on a layout. Layout objects can be active objects, which perform an action, or graphic objects.

On Background A display format for a picture field in which the picture is placed on top of any background object and can be moved by the user.

One file One of the two files in a relation. Each record in the One file is related to many records in another file (the Many file).

One-to-many relation A relation between two files in which several records in the Many file are selected by matching the value of a field in the One file with the related field in the Many file.

Only if Modified An attribute applied to an active object that restricts script execution to when the object is modified during data entry.

Operator A symbol which represents an operation. For example, a plus sign (+) is an operator which will add two numbers together.

Output layout A layout that is used to show several records in the form of a list or report.

Parameter See Argument.

\$0. \$1

Parent file The file to which a subfile belongs.

Parent record The record in a file to which subrecords belong.

Password A series of characters that a user must enter in order to gain access to a password-protected database.

Password access privileges Permission granted to users to use various parts of a database, including: layouts, menus, procedures and file operations.

Password access system The system of passwords, Users and Groups that controls access to various parts of a database.

Password editor The editor in the Design environment in which you create users, groups, assign passwords to users, and monitor the use of the database.

Permanent sort A reordering of records that is done with the Sort File command. The Sort File command permanently reorders the records on disk.

PICT A standard Macintosh format for storing object-oriented graphics.

Picture field A field type that can store bit-mapped or object-oriented pictures.

Pointer A data type in the programming language that points to where information is stored.

Pop-up menu A menu on a layout that appears when you click the object and hold down the mouse button.

Previous page An automatic button action used only in an input layout. It changes the display to the previous page of the layout but does not accept the record.

Previous record An automatic button action used only in an input layout. It accepts the record and changes the display to the previous record in the selection.

Primary sort field The first sort field in a multi-level sort. If there is only one sort field and that field is indexed, the sort is very fast.

Procedure One or more lines of code that are written in the Procedure editor. A procedure can be a global, layout, or file procedure. A global procedure that returns a value is a function.

Procedure editor An editor in the Design environment used to write procedures. The procedure editor can be either a Listing editor or a Flowchart editor. The Listing editor shows procedures as lines of text, and the Flowchart shows procedures graphically as steps and tests.

Quick Report An editor in the User environment that is used to create and print tabular reports with Break areas and summary calculations.

Radio buttons A series of one or more small round buttons used to represent information. The radio buttons may be controlled by the language or may show the value in a Boolean field. Only one radio button in a series can be "on" (highlighted).

Radio picture A series of one or more transparent buttons used to represent information. Each button usually has a graphic behind it. When the user clicks on one picture (i.e., button), the other buttons are turned "off" (not highlighted) and the clicked button stays highlighted.

Range checking A data validation technique in which minimum and maximum values are compared against an entry. When data is entered, 4th DIMENSION determines whether the entered value is above the minimum value and below the maximum value and alerts the user to an error.

Real field A field type that stores numbers which can contain decimal points.

Record A basic unit of information in a file. For example, a record can correspond to a person, a company, an invoice, a product in an inventory file, and so forth.

Related field The field to which a relation is established. If the relation is One to Many, the related field is in the Many file. If the relation is Many to One, the related field is in the One file.

Relating field The field which establishes a relation. If the relation is One to Many, the relating field is in the One file. If the relation is Many to One, the relating field is in the Many file.

Relation An association between two files. A relation is based on matching values between a field in each file. A relation is used to allow the files to share information. A relation is created by drawing a line from the relating field in the Many file to the related field in the One file.

Report layout A layout designed for printed reports, rather than display on screen. A report layout may have Break areas and summary calculations.

Required list A list of items against which an entry in a field is compared. The entry must be in the list or the entry is not accepted.

Routines Commands and functions in the 4th DIMENSION language.

Ruler (active object) An active object in which the value is represented by the position of a marker on a ruler.

Ruler (in Layout editor) A measurement grid on the sides of the layout editor for positioning objects.

Runtime application A database customized with menus that runs in the Runtime environment or with 4th DIMENSION Runtime.

Runtime environment One of the three work environments of 4th DIMENSION. The Runtime environment is where you use a database that has custom menus.

Runtime version A version of 4th DIMENSION for using a database with custom menus. The runtime version can only be used to manage data. It cannot be used to design a database. The runtime version is equivalent to the full 4th DIMENSION without the Design or User environments.

Scaled-to-fit picture A format used to display and print pictures. The format scales the picture to fit within a specified area.

Scatterplot A two-dimensional plot of points. The location of the points is determined by the two values assigned to the horizontal and vertical axes.

Script Instructions written in the 4th DIMENSION language that are “attached” to an active object in a layout. Scripts are used to manage the active object. Scripts are generally short.

Scrollable area An active object in a layout that is used to display an array. A scrollable area appears as a list that the user can scroll through and select from.

Search The process by which a group of records is selected.

Search by Formula A search method in which the search condition is described by a formula.

Search by Layout A search method in which a layout is displayed as a search window. The search condition is specified by typing values into fields.

Search condition A logical statement that instructs 4th DIMENSION to find one or more records based on the values in a field or fields. For example, “Last Name is equal to ‘Smith’” is a search condition that instructs 4th DIMENSION to find all records with the string “Smith” in the Last Name field.

Search editor A general-purpose search method that can be used to do simple or compound searches, limit the search to the current selection, and save search conditions to disk.

Secondary sort fields In a multi-level sort, the first sort field is the primary sort field and the remaining fields are the secondary sort fields.

Selection *See* Current selection.

Sequential search An unindexed search. In a sequential search, 4th DIMENSION examines each record in a file or selection.

Serial port A connector on the Macintosh used to communicate with printers, modems, and other devices. The 4th DIMENSION language contains commands to control communications through the serial port.

Set A temporary representation of a selection of records. Sets are used in the language to manipulate several selections at the same time.

Sort A reordering of records, usually performed before displaying or reporting.

Sort editor The editor in which the user can specify the fields to sort on.

Sort field A field that is the basis of a sort. A sort can be done on several sort fields or on formulas. *See also* Primary sort field *and* Secondary sort field.

Sort File A sort method in which the records in a file are sorted permanently.

Sort order The order in which the records are arranged after a sort.

Sort Selection A sort method in which the current selection of records is sorted. A sort selection is temporary.

Splash screen The graphic that is displayed when a user enters the Runtime environment or uses the application using 4th DIMENSION Runtime.

Startup procedure A global procedure that is executed automatically when a user opens a database.

Statement One line of code in a procedure.

Structure editor The editor in the Design environment that is used to create files, fields, subfiles, and relations among files.

Structure file The disk file that contains all the information about the design of the database—fields, files, layouts, menus, procedures, lists, and so forth—but not the data or the indexes.

Styles editor The editor in the Design environment in which formats and entry filters can be written and named as styles.

Subfield A field in a subfile.

Subfile A file that is automatically attached to a record in a parent file. Each record in the parent file stores a different subfile.

Subrecord A record in a subfile.

Subtotal The sum of fields in a report break. A subtotal is the sum of the values for the fields since the previous break.

System variables Variables that are automatically created by 4th DIMENSION. The OK system variable is frequently used to determine whether an operation has completed successfully.

Tab key The key on the keyboard normally used to move from field to field during data entry.

Template See Layout template.

Text area A graphic object in a layout that contains text. A text area may also contain embedded field names.

Text field A data type that can hold up to 32,000 characters. A Text field can be displayed on an input layout with a vertical scroll bar.

Thermometer An active object in which a value is represented by the length of a bar.

Time field A field type, which allows entries of times. Times are entered in HH:MM:SS format.

Tools palette The palette of 22 drawing tools in the Layout editor window.

Total row The row in the Quick Report editor in which summary calculations for all the records is calculated.

Transaction A series of data management operations.

Unique A field attribute that requires that each value for the field in each record be different.

User environment The environment that you use to manage data. In the User environment, you can enter, modify, and import data; search and sort records; create and print reports, labels, and graphs; and export data.

Validation See Data validation.

Variable An area in memory that holds a value. The contents of a variable are not stored in the database. A variable can be either a global variable or a local variable.

Variable frame A printing format for included layouts, pictures, and text. It specifies that the size of the area on the layout can grow to accommodate the size of the included layout, picture, or text when the layout is printed.

Wildcard (@) The symbol used in 4th DIMENSION to represent any other characters.

X-axis The horizontal scale in a two-dimensional graph

Y-axis The vertical scale in a two-dimensional graph.

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MASTER INDEX

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Examples

Advanced
Clockbook
Contacts II
Scheduler

To access

Design
hold down Option Key
click Mouse⁺